

Written for the ADVOCATE.

AN INDIAN TALE.

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The moaning November wind made dismal echoing music in the forest trees surrounding an humble home in wild Kuntia county. All within was wrapt in profound silence save for the short, quick cries of a new-born Indian babe. The interior was extremely primitive, from the low couch on which reposed the mother, to the wide, open fireplace, beside which stood a majestic man past early manhood, but in the prime of life. An aged woman sat crooning softly to the new-born one.

"Imistowa, dost thou not desire to name the boy for his brave grandsire—Cunecuh?"

The low, sweet voice roused the man from his reverie, and a rare, sweet smile lighted his sombre features. He crossed to her side, and taking the frail hands in his own, said:

"Yes, my Marie. We will call him by my father's name. He hath a sturdy body—may his spirit partake of his grandsire's courage!"

So the child became Cunecuh Imistowa.

Two years before my story opens, one evening in early autumn, an Indian hunter sought rest at a solitary house in northern Texas. Not many months before Francois Delapierree and his daughter, Marie, a maiden of barely seventeen summers, had come to that lonely place to make a home. The Indian received a cordial welcome. He had spent several years in New Orleans, and French was to him next to his own language. With the dawn he departed, but before many days he returned laden with the fruits of the chase. It was the oft-repeated story—fair, fragile beauty—strong, courageous manhood. Francois Delapierree liked the dark, handsome Imistowa, and before the snows of winter melted the hunter claimed a bride. Not a happier home than the little house in the Indian Territory.

Then came the dread news of war. Delapierree enlisted in the Southern army, and Imistowa joined the Indian protective band. Ah, the weary days! Then a letter from a Southern battlefield. Marie was fatherless. Not many months after came the birth of Cunecuh.

The years succeeded each other, bringing tidings of peace, and their usual burdens of sorrow and joy. The little Cunecuh grew apace. He was a still, thoughtful child, with great wandering brown eyes, always with a look of pain. He never laughed in childish abandon, yet his smile was of wondrous beauty. The mother fostered his love for his grave father, the stern silent man, who never smiled save when with wife or child. He was well versed in tales of bravery, not of his tribe alone, but of the world's famed ones. God blessed them with other children, but no boy came to share the sports of Cunecuh. When the third girl came and was presented to the father, the stern lines about his mouth relaxed, and stooping to show the new sister to Cunecuh, he spoke with mock solemnity:

"Ah! boy, I am too poor to have so many girls. Not another daughter will I receive, and, methinks, I shall give this away."

A pained expression crept into the brown eyes, and the little man clutched the baby's dress while the childish treble quivered:

"Nay father, it must not be. Surely we will keep the little ones who come. Thou art poor! Then will I help thee to work. When I am a man I will care for my sisters. Wilt thou do so Father?"

The father clasped his son.

"Thou art my pride; one day thou wilt take my place. God help thee, my son."

I record but a commonplace life; no great events disturbed them. Imistowa was called to the council chamber, and he labored for his people. In the quiet evenings of summer, when the balmy